Statement by Chief Marcel Happyjack on behalf of the Cree First Nation of Waswanipi On the proposed Uranium Project. On November 12, 2014 to The BAPE Hearings in Chibougoumou, Quebec.

First of all I would like to acknowledge all the members of the BAPE Commission as they travel across Eeyou Istchee. I trust you have experienced its pristine beauty and will enable you to better understand our position. Like many you have heard throughout Eeyou Istchee We the Cree of Waswanipi Oppose Uranium exploration, uranium exploitation and uranium waste emplacement. We strongly believe that is will have great potential risk on our way of life of the Cree of Waswanipi**.** We are taking a Zero RISK approach in maintaining our lands and the life giving water resources.

While others view this project and it potential benefits great – these are short term, and they are greatest benefit to Strateco. When the money has been spent, and jobs are over – IT IS THE CREE THAT WILL BE LEFT WITH THE ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES OF THIS PROJECT. When the machines and people are long gone, the Cree people will still be here and continue to on and off the land. This is why oppose Uranium mining.

We are a people that base our traditional activities from hunting, fishing and maintain a strong relationship with our water sources in our traditional territory. Our land and water sources are our way of life. It is to be maintained for our future generations.

To this day our people use fishing activities, and we even showcase our skills and expertise in using and maintaining fishing activities – the Waswanipi Cree are well known for their skills as fisherman experts. Our community name derives from the Cree Word Waswan, where we fished with torch burning sticks to spear fish at night. That is how the name Waswanipi comes from, this demonstrates our expertise.

The people of Waswanipi recognize and are concerned about the Uranium activities that will create tailing ponds, and although some may say that is low risk, we do not accept any risk no matter how minimal it is deemed. We will protect our way of life and activities by ensuring that we have Zero Risk. This is why we do not consent to Uranium development.

We have firsthand experience regarding tailing ponds and I am here to present them.

Tailing ponds can rupture-that is a fact. We have experienced this first hand within our traditional territory near Chapais, Quebec back in 2004, where we witnessed the environmental consequences of a tailing rupture. The fish were impacted, plant life and also all fur bearing animals and our way of life. There is no guarantee on the design of tailing ponds to be rupture proof. Should a pond leak, this water will run far and wide. Our surface water and ground water will bear the risk of contamination, the animals and plant life on which we rely for sustenance and nourishment drink this water. We the Cree's, drink this water. We are the ones who will bear the brunt of any health risks associated with contamination. We refuse to take this Risk on all potential Uranium contamination.

Strateco does not control the earth; the land is a living thing. No matter what you plan or intend to do with it, ultimately it will do as it pleases and no one can put a guarantee on that. The Cree recognize that we are the keepers of these lands and our goal is to protect it.

Strateco does not control the air; the air is a living spirit, which sustains our body mind and soul. Dust from tailing evaporation rises through the air, and this matter travels, Strateco has not guarantee on how far these contaminants travel. Strateco cannot guarantee the direction in which the air flows, so this risk that is projected is too high for the Cree.

Strateco does not control the rain. The tailing ponds are open pools of water filled with contaminants and these ponds are subject to rain falling into them. If this pond overflows due to heavy downpour the water will run freely. With all the erratic weather from global warming this is a major risk.

We the Cree recognize that we must live in balance with the elements, we recognize that our way of life and activities depend on it. We strongly urge this information be taken into serious consideration as valid and important facts that are carried by and respected by the Cree First Nation of Waswanipi for the sake of our future generation and way of life as entrusted to us by our forefathers.

On a final note, I again reaffirm our position against Uranium Development and I urge you take our statement seriously against Uranium Development, and say No to the Matoush Project as proposed by Strateco.